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**Remarks**

Claims 14-18 and 20-26 remain in this application. Reconsideration and reexamination of the application is respectfully requested. Claim 19 has been canceled and its contents have been incorporated into amended claim 1.

Claims 14-26 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject-matter which applicant regards as the invention. According to the Examiner, the claims were deemed generally narrative and indefinite, appeared to be a literal translation and the specific steps were deemed unclear.

In response to the Examiner's objection, claim 14 has been amended so as to clearly define the operational features of the step of forming tabs.

Specifically, the claim recites a definition of the term "sector" and of its correspondence with the feeds of the machine, which is taken from the original specification, page 5, lines 27-30 and page 6, line 1. It is now clear that:

- the needles are grouped into sectors around the needle cylinder;
- each of the sectors is associated to a respective feed of the machine,
- when the tabs are to be knitted, all the needles of each sector pass in front of the respective feed of the machine, according to a reciprocal motion.

The Examiner also objected to the recitation "exclusively all or some". It is believed that such an objection is hereby traversed by reciting "at least some", whose meaning also includes "all".

The original term "transit" was deemed unclear, too. In accordance with the original specification, page 4, lines 11-16, such term was used for indicated that all the needles of the sector pass in front of the feed that is correlated to that sector, during an alternating rotary motion of the needle cylinder about its axis. In order to give a clearer definition of the original term "transit" in the claims, claim 1 now recites that the extent of oscillation of the alternating rotary motion is sufficient to make all the needles of each sector pass at the respective feed.

Finally, in order to traverse the Examiner's objection against claim 22, the expression "pocket-like" is hereby replaced with "pocket" in claims 22-25.

Therefore, it is believed that the claims now particularly point out and distinctly

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claim the subject matter the applicants regard as the invention, in compliance with the requirement of 35 U.S.C. 112.

\* \* \* \* \*

Claims 14-22 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by British patent document 1078462.

Applicants respectfully disagree with the Examiner. In fact, although British patent document 1078462 discloses needles arranged into sectors for knitting corresponding tabs (see sectors 5,3,4,6 of figure 16 and the corresponding sectors of the finished product in figure 15), such document fails to disclose that the needle cylinder, in such specific sector, is actuated with an alternating rotary motion about its own axis, with an extent of oscillation that is sufficient to make all the needles of each sector pass at the respective feed.

In fact, page 5, lines 5-8 of British patent document 1078462 explicitly state that the manufacturing method of the four straps of sector IV (figure 15) is the same as that described with reference to figure 1. In such figure, as it is clear from page 3, lines 70-75, a whole circumferential course (e.g. E<sub>1</sub>) is knitted before the rotation of the needle cylinder is reversed. This suggests a 360° alternating swing of the needle cylinder both in figure 1 and in figure 15.

To the contrary, in the method according to claim 1 as hereby submitted, the swing of the needle cylinder is limited to the size of the sectors, i.e. it requires that not all the needles of the needle cylinder, but only the needles of the sector are made to pass in front of a certain feed, which is the one to which the sector is associated. Accordingly, the swing of the needle cylinder is limited to few degrees.

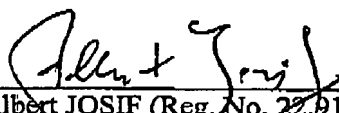
Because of this remarkable difference between the claimed method and British patent document 1078462, applicants respectfully believes that the pending claims are in an allowable condition.

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Respectfully submitted,

  
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